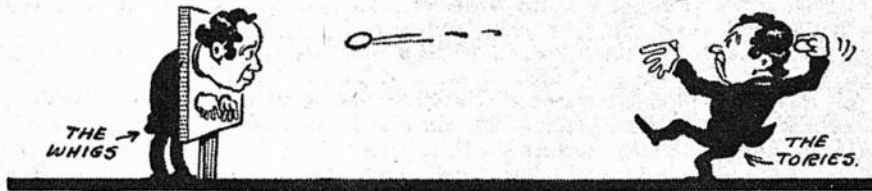


EDITORIAL SECTION

Concerning Americanism and Hypocrites

AS SCHOOL BOYS we learned that at one time in various parts of the world governments existed for the benefit of sovereigns, not for the benefit of peoples. We learned that various rulers from time immemorial claimed a divine right to rule. We learned that time was when, nearly everywhere throughout the world, citizens were not equal before the law—that certain classes had privileges in law which the masses did not enjoy. We learned



that rulers and governments tried to force people to worship God in a way their consciences told them was wrong. We learned that freedom of speech, press and opinion were denied the people in most countries.

We remember the stories our teachers told us about agitators and reformers who maintained that all this was wrong. We thrilled at the accounts of men whose outspoken belief in liberty could not be shaken by the dungeon, the pillory and the scaffold. How we listened to accounts of brave men who festered in prison, who were whipped at the cart's tail from Newgate to Tyburn, who were hanged, drawn and quartered because they ventured to assert that government should exist for the people, that a man's religion was his personal business, that it was barbarous to persecute people for their political opinions, that speech and press should be free, and that every man was equal before the law!

THEN we learned how these agitators and reformers were gloriously vindicated—how in 1776 a Declaration of Independence was written, and, after a long and bloody war of revolution, a Constitution was framed and adopted, forever establishing human liberty. These sacred documents, which no American mentions without a feeling of pride, we were taught established a new thing in the world—Americanism! And what was the essence of the Americanism so established? It was the sovereignty of the people. It was self-government through guaranteed rights of free speech, peaceful assemblage, free press, free opinion—the equality of all before the law. That was the essence of it.

And now in A. D. 1919, 140 years after the American Declaration of Independence and Constitution, we read of the formation of "Americanism organizations," to preserve and keep Americanism intact. We hear senators and governors and publicists solemnly warning us that Americanism is in danger—that unless desperate measures are adopted somebody or something is going to deprive us of our priceless heritage. We see long and labored editorials and articles in magazines and newspapers, declaring that the principles on which our country was founded are about to be swept away by "anarchists," "Socialists," "Bolsheviks" and what-nots. We are treated to fiery and fanatical appeals to passion and prejudice against persons or organizations or publications said to be "un-American" or "anti-American."

ARE these gentlemen, who seem to be so much disturbed, afraid that the right of free speech is going to be abrogated? Hardly. Most of them are clamoring about there being too much free speech as it is. They refuse to consent to a repeal of the wartime restrictions on speech and opinion, although the war



is over. They propose laws like that before the Minnesota legislature, making it a felony to carry banners in parades criticizing government. Yet free speech is an essential part of Americanism, as we were taught in school to understand it.

Are these gentlemen, who talk of Americanism being menaced, referring to the right of citizens to freedom of movement and residence? We think not. They defended deportations, such as occurred against miners at Bisbee, Ariz., and against farmers in

Rock county, Minn. They ask for more stringent laws against freedom of movement and residence. Yet, the thing which they now propose to limit and restrict, we learned as children is a God-given right of humanity, assured us by the Americanism of the Declaration of Independence and Constitution.

Perhaps the gentlemen who are nervous about alleged attempts to destroy Americanism mean that the right of the sovereign people to rule is threatened. Yet, that hardly seems to be the case. We find them speaking with horror about the legislature of North Dakota because it is carrying out a program which the overwhelming majority of the people of that state voted for. Yet the sovereignty of the people, we have always believed, was American per se.

Is not all this remarkable? Is it not strange that gentlemen who profess to believe Americanism is menaced, who call their fellow citizens "un-American" and "anti-American," are themselves seeking to destroy the foundation of Americanism?

THE Leader believes in Americanism. We believe the rights of free speech, peaceful assemblage and free press are precious. Without them self-government is impossible. Without them life is not worth living. With them America is safe. No political or economic abuse can long exist while the people are free to discuss it and complain about it. No rebellion, no bloody revolution, no anarchy will develop or prevail as long as the people are freely permitted to rule and by majorities gained at the polls permitted to correct the causes of discontent.

But for gentlemen who talk loudly about Americanism and demand restrictions on free speech and political opinion we have no patience. We hold in utter contempt the man who says he wants to preserve Americanism and who demands oppressive laws to persecute those who differ with him in politics and economics. For that kind of "Americanism" every true American has only scorn.

To the hypocrites who are talking about Americanism we say this: Americanism primarily consists of the right of a majority of the people to rule; the right of every man or organization to ob-



tain, if possible, a majority in favor of measures he or it proposes; the right of free speech and peaceful assemblage; the right to hold any religious or political opinion desired. Above everything else, that is Americanism, and what is more, **THE HYPOCRITES KNOW IT** as well as anybody else.

YELLING BEFORE THEY ARE HIT

WE HAVE before us a pamphlet entitled, "Farmers, Investigate! Shall We Be Governed by a League Affiliated With the I. W. W.?" It purports to be issued by the "Utah State Farm Bureau, by State Committee." We do not know whether this is a fake bureau, a camouflage for interests which seek to conceal themselves, or whether there is really such a bureau, and if so whether it is some official state agency or other responsible body.

The Nonpartisan league is not organizing in Utah and, so far as we know, has no plans for organizing there. Nevertheless somebody in Utah is getting awful nervous—yelling before they are hit. They have collected in this pamphlet as much misinformation in as small a space as we have ever had the pleasure of seeing. The pamphlet purports to give verbatim the articles of association of the League. A few sentences here and there seem to have been copied from the League's articles, but someone has very crudely eliminated whole passages and substituted other language. One or two illustrations of the method will suffice to indicate the crude work. Mr. Townley is made president of the League by the fake articles for a term of 12 years, dating from the time of adoption of the articles, two years ago. As a matter of fact, he was elected January 1, 1917, for a term of two years, which expired January 1, 1919, when he was re-elected by the national committee and approved by League members in a referendum. The fake articles describe, as a part of the League organization plan, in addition to state committees, "state councils" of the League. The real articles of the League contain no such provisions.

Besides the forged articles of association given as genuine, the pamphlet "proves" that the League is a fraud by quoting a letter